1

SITUATING KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

How is it possible to decolonize (social) research in/on the non-Western developing countries to ensure that the people's human condition is not constructed through Western hegemony and ideology?

Patience Elabor-Idemudia (2002, p. 231)

Overview

The main thrust of this chapter is that current academic research traditions are founded on the culture, history, and philosophies of Euro-Western thought and are therefore indigenous to the Western academy and its institutions. These methodologies exclude from knowledge production the knowledge systems of formerly colonized, historically marginalized, and oppressed groups, which today are most often represented as Other and fall under broad categories of non-Western, third world, developing, underdeveloped, First Nations, indigenous peoples, third world women, African American women, and so on. The chapter commences with discussion of some of the concepts and terms used in the book and an outline of the process and strategies for decolonizing Western-based research.

1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

1. Explain the decolonization of the research process and the strategies for decolonization.

2. Appreciate the need for researchers to interrogate the "captive" or "colonized mind" and engage in multiple epistemologies that are inclusive of voices of those who suffered colonization, the disenfranchised, and dispossessed, often represented as the Other, non-Western, third world, developing, underdeveloped, First Nations, indigenous peoples, third world women, African American women, and historically marginalized groups.

Before You Start

Relate your experiences with research either as a research participant, research assistant, or researcher. What did you like most about the experience? What were your challenges, and how did you address them? Reflect on indigenous research topics that you might want to do, and debate if the current social science research methodologies are adequate for conducting research on such topics.

INTRODUCTION

There is growing evidence that social science research "needs emancipation from hearing only the voices of Western Europe, emancipation from generations of silence, and emancipation from seeing the world in one color" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 212). Social science research needs to involve spirituality in research, respecting communal forms of living that are not Western and creating space for inquiries based on relational realities and forms of knowing that are predominant among the non-Western Other/s still being colonized. I have always been disturbed by the way in which the Euro-Western research process disconnects me from the multiple relations that I have with my community, the living and the nonliving. I belong to the Bantu people of Africa, who live a communal life based on a connectedness that stretches from birth to death, continues beyond death, and extends to the living and the nonliving. I am known and communicate in relational terms that connect me to all my relations, living and the nonliving. It is common for people to refer to each other using totems as well as relational terms such as *uncle, aunt, brother,* and so on. For instance, my totem is a crocodile, and depending on who is talking to me and on what occasion, I can be referred to using my totem.

The importance of connectedness and relationships is not unique to the Bantu people of southern Africa. Shawn Wilson (2008) notes that in the speech of the Aboriginal Australians, other indigenous people are referred to as cousin, brother, or auntie. Ideally, the multiple connections that indigenous scholars have with those around them and with the living and the nonliving should form part of their social history and should inform how

they see the world and how they relate with the researched. Euro-Western hegemonic methodologies, however, continue to dominate how we think and conduct research.

Recently, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) approved a proposal from the Centre for Scientific Research, Indigenous and Innovative Knowledge (CES-RIK) at the University of Botswana to conduct a survey on indigenous knowledge systems. The CESRIK committee, of which I am a member, met to discuss the approach to the survey. First, there was brainstorming on the different categories of indigenous knowledge. The next step was to discuss the approach that would be used for a survey on a given category of indigenous knowledge. Some suggested that we should conduct a workshop where academic experts on indigenous knowledge systems would give keynote presentations to an audience made up of community elders, experts in indigenous knowledge such as herbalists, members of the association of traditional healers, storytellers, and traditional leaders. Others warned that the process of knowledge production—the naming, concepts, thought analysis, sources of knowledge, and what is accepted as evidence by indigenous knowledge experts—could be different from what academic keynote speakers accept; others pointed out that the translation from English, the official language, to local languages could distort the communication even further. Still, others noted that indigenous experts from the communities could choose not to participate in the discussion unless they were assured of a copyright on the knowledge they brought into the discussions.

These discussions point to the operation of two knowledge systems. One is Euro-Western and indigenous to the Western academy and its institutions; the other knowledge is non-Western and peripheral, and it operates with the values and belief systems of the historically colonized. This peripheral knowledge system values relationships and is suspicious of Western academic discourse and its colonizing tendencies. Paddy Ladd (2003) notes that academic discourse systems

> contain [their] own unspoken rules as to what can or cannot be said and how, when and where. Each therefore, constructs canons of truth around whatever its participants decide is "admissible evidence," a process that in the case of certain prestigious discourses, such as those found in universities, medical establishments and communication media, can be seen as particularly dangerous when unexamined, for these then come to determine what counts as knowledge. (p. 76)

As more and more scholars begin to engage with imperialism and colonialism in research, make choices on what they research, and delve into areas that colonial epistemologies dismissed as sorcery, they are confronted by the real limitations of Western hegemonic research practices, for example, ethical standards such as the principle of informed consent of the researched.

Batshi Tshireletso's study (2001) on the Mazenge cult is an example of challenges that confront researchers. Mazenge is a cult of affliction (hereditary spirits of the bush or spirits). Its membership is entirely women. In this study, Tshireletso wanted to show how the concepts of sacred space in the Mazenge cult are constructed and to establish the meanings of sacredness in the Mazenge cult. In doing this research, he was confronted by several challenges. Talking about the Mazenge cult is a public taboo. The word *Mazenge* is not supposed to be mentioned in public. Access to the Mazenge spirit medium in connection with the Mazenge cult is impossible when the medium is not in a state of being possessed. As a result, Tshireletso observes, he was unable to interview the Mazenge spirit

medium. The impression one gets is that he would have talked to the spirit, even if she were possessed. The following are the ethical principles that arise:

1. Is it ethical to seek consent from one who is being possessed?

2. If the principal informant, the Mazenge medium, cannot be interviewed while not possessed, how can data collection about the spirit be validated?

3. Is it ethical to write about the researched on the basis of what others say about them?

4. What is the message behind the community sanction against communication with Mazenge spirit mediums?

5. Is there a possibility that in researching Mazenge, Tshireletso was violating Mazenge community copyrights to their knowledge?

Tshireletso's study shows how mainstream practice and interpretations of informed consent and copyright are not inclusive of the knowledge stored in rituals and practices like Mazenge. Such examples demonstrate the need for the research community to expand the boundaries of knowledge production and research practices in order to stop further abuses of fundamental human rights of the researched in historically colonized societies. These rights should include the opportunity to have a say on whether they can be written about, what can be written about them, and how it can be written and disseminated; they should also have the option of being trained to conduct the research themselves. Currently, scholars debate the following questions:

- Is the knowledge production process espoused by mainstream methodologies respectful and inclusive of all knowledge systems? Are the following inclusive of all knowledge systems?
  1. The philosophies that underpin the research approach
  2. Methods of collecting data
  3. Sources of evidence
  4. The analysis, reporting, and dissemination process

- Are First Nations peoples, indigenous peoples, peoples of all worlds—that is, first world, second world, third, and fourth world, developed and developing countries, disenfranchised and dispossessed peoples—given equal rights through the research process to know, to name, to talk, and be heard?

- What are the concerns about current research methodologies?

- What challenges arise in using Western-based theory when research is carried out among those who suffered European colonial rule and slavery and are continuously being marginalized by the current research tradition?

- What are the challenges that researchers encounter in the literature that inform research on these communities?

- What do the multiple voices of scholars from across the globe say about Euro-Western research methodologies?

- How can we carry out research so that it is respectful and beneficial to the researched communities?

Most of the concerns and questions raised above are addressed in this book. It will demonstrate how scholars continue to critique Euro-Western research paradigms and advance ways of transforming them so that they are inclusive of the indigenous knowledge systems and life experiences of the historically colonized, disenfranchised, and dispossessed communities. A postcolonial indigenous research paradigm and its methods and methodologies are discussed.

TERMINOLOGY IN POSTCOLONIAL INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

A variety of terms are used in this chapter and throughout the book. Although most of them are commonplace terms, it is important to spell out their precise meaning in this work.

Research: It is systematic, that is, it is the adoption of a strategy or a set of principles to study an issue of interest. The systematic strategy usually starts with the identification of an area of interest to study; a review of the literature to develop further understanding of the issue to be investigated; and choice of a research design or strategy that will inform the way the sampling of respondents is performed, the instruments for data collection, the analysis, interpretation, and reporting of the findings. You should in addition problematize research as a power struggle between researchers and the researched. Michel Foucault (1977), for example, observes that

> what we know and how we know [are] grounded in shifting and diverse historical human practices, politics, and power. There are in the production of knowledge multiple centres of power in constant struggle; [through] conflict, compromise, and negotiation . . . whichever group is strongest establishes its own rules on what can be known and how it can be known. A non-power related truth game is not possible, thus humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination. (p. 151)

The research you do will have the power to label, name, condemn, describe, or prescribe solutions to challenges in former colonized, indigenous peoples and historically oppressed groups. You are encouraged to conduct research without perpetuating self-serving Western research paradigms that construct Western ways of knowing as superior to the Other's ways of knowing. The book draws your attention to the emphasis on the role of the researcher as a provocateur (Mertens, 2010a) and a transformative healer (Chilisa, 2009; Chilisa & Ntseane 2010; Dillard, 2008; Ramsey, 2006) guided by the four Rs: accountable responsibility, respect, reciprocity, and rights and regulations of the researched (Ellis & Earley, 2006; Louis, 2007; Weber-Pillwax, 2001; Wilson, 2008), as well as roles and responsibilities of researchers as articulated in ethics guidelines and protocols of the former colonized, indigenous peoples and the historically oppressed. The position taken in this book is that postcolonial indigenous research methodologies should stand on an equal footing with Western research paradigms and should be an essential and integral part of any research methodology course.

You are invited to problematize a "captive or colonized mind" on the entire systematic set of principles to study an issue.

The Captive Mind. Partha N. Mukherji (2004) challenges all researchers to debate whether the social science methodologies that originated in the West and are indigenous to the West are necessarily universal for the rest of the world. What is your reaction to the challenge? The Malaysian sociologist Syed Hussein Alatas (2004) developed the concept "the captive mind" to refer to an uncritical imitation of Western research paradigms within scientific intellectual activity. Others (Fanon, 1967; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986a, 1986b) discuss a process they call colonization of the mind. This is a process that involves stripping the formerly colonized and historically marginalized groups of their ancestral culture and replacing it with Euro-Western culture. The process occurs through the education system, where learners are taught in languages of the colonizers to reject their heritage and embrace Euro-Western worldviews and lifestyles as the human norm. The rejection of the historically colonized and marginalized groups' heritage and the adoption of Euro-Western norms occur throughout all the stages in the research process. For instance, the conceptual framework, development of the research questions, and methods of data collection in most studies emanate from the developed world literature, which is predominantly Euro-Western. In addition, the language in the construction of research instruments and the dissemination of research findings is in most cases that of the colonizers. You are invited to problematize research and doing research "as a significant site of the struggle between the interest and knowing of the West and the interest and knowing of the 'Other'" (Smith, 1999, p. 2). What follows is a discussion of imperialism and colonialism with special attention to the power imbalance that exists between the Euro-Western research paradigm and non-Western societies that suffered European colonial rule, indigenous peoples, and historically marginalized communities.

Imperialism, Colonialism, and Othering Ideologies

One of the shortfalls of Euro-Western research paradigms is that they ignore the role of imperialism, colonization, and globalization in the construction of knowledge. An understanding of the values and assumptions about imperialism, colonization, and globalization that inform Euro-Western research paradigms will enable you to appreciate and understand how Euro-Western methodologies carry with them an imperial power and how they are colonizing. Let us begin with a description of imperialism and the values and assumptions that inform Euro-Western methodologies.

Imperialism. Imperialism, in the more recent sense in which the term is used, refers to the acquisition of an empire of overseas colonies and the Europeanization of the globe (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000). The term is also used to describe the "practice, theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory" (Said, 1993, p. 8). The theory, practice, and attitudes of the metropolitan created an idea about the West and the Other that explains the dominance of Euro-Western research paradigms and the empire of deficit literature on the formerly colonized and historically oppressed. The term *Othering* was coined by Gayatri Spivak to denote a process through which Western knowledge creates differences between itself as the norm and other

knowledge systems as inferior (Ashcroft et al., 2000). Stuart Hall (1992) explains the West as a concept describing a set of ideas, historical events, and social relationships. The concept functions in ways that allow the characterization and classification of societies into binary opposites of colonizer/colonized or first world/third world. The concept also condenses complex descriptions of other societies into a sameness image judged against the West idea. Chapter 3 illustrates how the Othering and sameness ideologies work to marginalize and suppress knowledge systems and ways of knowing of the historically colonized and those disadvantaged on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and social class.

Colonization. Colonization, defined as the subjugation of one group by another (Young, 2001), was a brutal process through which two thirds of the world experienced invasion and loss of territory accompanied by the destruction of political, social, and economic systems, leading to external political control and economic dependence on the West: France, Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia, and the United States. It also involved loss of control and ownership of their knowledge systems, beliefs, and behaviors and subjection to overt racism, resulting in the captive or colonized mind. One can distinguish between different but intertwined types of colonialism—namely, political colonialism, which refers to occupation and external control of the colonies, and scientific colonialism, which refers to the imposition of the colonizers' ways of knowing—and the control of all knowledge produced in the colonies. In Africa, colonial occupation occurred in 1884 when Britain, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain met at the Berlin Conference and divided Africa among themselves. African states became colonies of European powers and assumed names related to the colonial power and its settlers, explorers, or missionaries. For example, present-day Zimbabwe was named Southern Rhodesia, and Zambia was named Northern Rhodesia after the explorer Cecil John Rhodes. European explorers, travelers, and hunters were notorious for claiming discovery of African lands, rivers, lakes, waterfalls, and many other of Africa's natural showcases and renaming them. This was a violent way of dismissing the indigenous people's knowledge as irrelevant and a way of disconnecting them from what they knew and how they knew it (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). Scientific colonialism speaks directly to the production of knowledge and ethics in social science research and has been described as the imposition of the positivist paradigm approach to research on the colonies and other historical oppressed groups. Under the guise of scientific colonialism, researchers travelled to distant colonized lands, where they turned the resident people into objects of research. The ideology of scientific colonization carried with it the belief that the researchers had unlimited rights of access to any data source and information belonging to the population and the right to export data from the colonies for purposes of processing into books and articles (Cram, 2004a, 2004b). With these unlimited powers, researchers went out to collect data and write about the one reality that they understood. In the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, and history, operating on the positivist assumption of generating and discovering laws and theories that are generalizable, researchers mapped theories, formulae, and practices that continue to dictate how former colonized societies can be studied and written about. Psychology, for instance, developed standard conceptions and formulations by which all people of the world are to be understood; today, researchers molded to accept oppressive perspectives as the norm find it difficult to operate differently (Ramsey, 2006).

Scientific colonization has implications for the decolonization process. Reading and conducting research responsibly should involve reflecting on the following questions:

1. Does the research approach have a clear stance against scientific colonization?

2. Is the research approach of travelers moving to distant lands to acquire data to process them into books and journal articles ethical?

3. Where is the center of knowledge and information about a people or community located?

Globalization.   Globalization is an extension of colonization. Spivak (1988) analyzes the contemporary relationship between colonial societies and the former colonizers and notes that we are witnessing a distinct phase in the way the world is ordered. She notes that, in the current phase of globalization, a mere extension of colonization,

> the contemporary international division of labor is a displacement of the field of nineteenth-century territorial imperialism. Put simply, a group of countries, generally first world, are in the position of investing capital; another group, generally third world, provide[s] the fields for investment both through the com- prador indigenous capitalists and through their ill-protected and shifting labor force. (p. 287)

Current attempts by researchers to find the cure for HIV and AIDS are an exam- ple of how people in former colonized societies provide the fields as objects/subjects for research by multinational corporations. Recently, there has been conflict over a trial of the drug Tenofovir, which researchers allege may eventually serve as an effective chemical vaccine against the human immunodeficiency virus that causes AIDS. In Cambodia, efforts to test the drug among prostitutes were unsuccessful. The sex workers wanted more pay, more information, and a promise of health insurance for 40 years. Although the researchers agreed to provide more information for the sex workers, they said they could not promise long-term insurance; it was not something that is typically provided in studies and would be prohibitively expensive, they argued (Cha, 2006). The question one asks is what research benefits can accrue to poor countries, where the drug may not be affordable to the HIV and AIDS at-risk groups like sex workers? The conflict between the researchers and sex workers arose when the sex workers demanded the right to define the benefits they wanted as research subjects. The conflict between the researchers and the researched, and the determination of the researched to speak out about their rights, are indicative of local resistance against colonization and its new form, globalization.

Elsewhere, Bagele Chilisa and Julia Preece (2005) noted how the stealing of African indigenous knowledge of local resources such as plants and herbs by Western-trained researchers and Western companies is a contemporary instance of how African indige- nous knowledge systems continue to be marginalized. The authors give an example of the San and their knowledge of the hoodia cactus plant, which grows in the Kalahari Desert. The original home of the San, it is a vast area of land that cuts across Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa. Through observation and experiments, the San discovered that the hoodia cactus has medicinal properties that stave off hunger. Members of generation

after generation of the San have thus chewed the plant on long hunting trips. According to Pusch Commey (2003), Phytopharm, a United Kingdom-based company working with the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, isolated the active ingredients in the cactus that makes this possible. The company has renamed this property, long known by the San, P57, and it has been manufactured into a diet pill that fetches large amounts of money for pharmaceutical companies. The San had to fight to reclaim their intellectual property of the qualities of the hoodia cactus plant.

Postcolonial Indigenous Research

Postcolonial indigenous research methodologies must be informed by the resistance to Euro-Western thought and the further appropriation of their knowledge.

Postcolonial. The word *postcolonial* is highly contested and at the same time popular (Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Swadener & Mutua, 2008). The bone of contention is that some can read the post to mean that colonialism has ended, while others can interpret postcolonialism to include people with diverse and qualitatively different experiences with colonialism. For instance, the United States began as a British colony, but the white settlers ended up imposing colonization on Native Americans. The word *postcolonial* is used in the research context to denote the continuous struggle of non-Western societies that suffered European colonization, indigenous peoples, and historically marginalized groups to resist suppression of their ways of knowing and the globalization of knowledge, reaffirming that Western knowledge is the only legitimate knowledge. Part of the project in this book is to envisage a space where those who suffered European colonial rule and slavery, the disenfranchised and dispossessed, can reclaim their languages, cultures, and "see with their own eyes" the history of colonization, imperialism, and their new form, globalization, and, with that gaze, create new research methodologies that take into account the past and the present as a continuum of the future. This is the in-between space where Euro-Western research methodologies steeped in the culture, histories, philosophies, and the social condition of the Westerners can collaborate with the non-Western colonized's lived experiences and indigenous knowledge to produce research indigenous to their communities and cultural, integrative research frameworks with balanced lending and borrowing from the West.

Throughout the book, I will use the term *colonized Other* to refer to those who suffered European colonization, the disenfranchised and dispossessed, often represented as the non-Western Other. These people live in what has been labelled the third world, developing countries, or underdeveloped countries. Included among the *colonized Other* are indigenous populations in countries such as Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. Ethno-specific groups who have lived in some Western countries, such as African Americans in the United States and Caribbean-born people in the United Kingdom, also fall under the category of Other. Immigrants, refugees fleeing war-torn countries, and the poor are also being colonized and marginalized by Eurocentric research paradigms and thus fall under the category of the Other referred to in this book. The term *colonized Other* emphasizes the fact that the communities described still suffer scientific colonization as well as colonization of the mind. Part of the project in this book is to show how the colonized Other resists scientific colonization and colonization of the

mind. The book illustrates some of the methodologies informed by the worldviews and ways of knowing of the colonized Other.

Indigenous. The term *indigenous* has been used in different ways in third world, fourth world, and marginalized people's struggles against invasion, political domination, and oppression. In this book, the focus is on a cultural group's ways of perceiving reality, ways of knowing, and the value systems that inform research processes. Euro-Western research paradigms are, for instance, indigenous to Euro-Western societies. This is not to say that the other has not shaped the development of these methods. The questions we ask are, what is indigenous to the other two-thirds majority of people colonized and marginalized by Eurocentric research paradigms? What is real to the diverse cultural groups of the two-thirds majority? How can this reality be studied? How would those colonized in the third world, indigenous peoples, women, and marginalized communities define their reality and ways of knowing? Their ways of seeing reality, ways of knowing, and values systems are informed by their indigenous knowledge systems and shaped by the struggle to resist and survive the assault on their culture. That is what makes the methodologies indigenous.

Indigenous research has four dimensions: (1) It targets a local phenomenon instead of using extant theory from the West to identify and define a research issue; (2) it is context-sensitive and creates locally relevant constructs, methods, and theories derived from local experiences and indigenous knowledge; (3) it can be integrative, that is, combining Western and indigenous theories; and (4) in its most advanced form, its assumptions about what counts as reality, knowledge, and values in research are informed by an indigenous research paradigm. The assumptions in an indigenous paradigm guide the research process. The book also makes reference to indigenous peoples. Linda T. Smith (1999, p. 7) says *indigenous peoples* is a relatively recent term that emerged in the 1970s out of the struggles of the American Indian Movement and the Canadian Brotherhood Movement; it is used to internationalize the experiences and struggles of some of the world's colonized peoples.

Relationality. The principle of relationality pushes to the center of every research encounter the importance of building relationships with the communities, all stakeholders, and partners and honoring the relationship that people have with the land, the living, and nonliving. In Chapter 7, in a study on "enveloping quantitative research," Blackstock (2009) relates how the spiritual is honored by employing symbolic art, poetry, legends, and teaching to substantiate the findings. The physical is also brought into the research by printing the report in an ecological friendly ink. In the next chapter, a relational post-colonial indigenous paradigm is discussed.

Responsibility. It is about the role of a researcher in pursuing social justice, resisting dominant ideologies that silence indigenous communities and contributing to the recovery, healing, unity, and harmony in the community. The responsibilities of researchers are discussed in Chapter 10. In Chapter 10, researchers are asked to reflect on their roles when they engage with communities.

Reverence. Indigenous research recognizes spirituality and values it as an important contribution to ways of knowing. Ignoring spirituality can cause tensions between researchers with a Western research orientation and communities (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012).

Imagine, for example, carrying out an evaluation research of a health facility that is ignored by the community. The evaluator bent on deficit theorizing about the "other" will label poor use of the health facility as backwardness, while a respectful and responsible evaluator will consider as knowledge that the facility was built on sacred ground and needs to relocate if the community is to use it.

Respect.   In this book, the concept of respectful representation and respectful relations is discussed. Respect requires that the research process from the research questions asked, the methodology, the data collection procedure, down to reporting and dissemination of the report is guided by the community and that the community has ownership of data collected. Relevant programs, relevant research that benefits communities, is the hallmark of respectful relations and respectful research.

Reflexivity.   The principle of responsibility is tied to reflexivity. Researchers continuously reflect on their position within existing powers. They also reflect on the methodology and the methods and imagine other ways of doing research that emanate from indigenous knowledge systems. In Chapter 7, Botha (2011) demonstrates the application of this concept.

DECOLONIZATION OF WESTERN RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

A number of scholars (Bishop, 2008a, 2008b; Chilisa, 2005; Chilisa & Ntseane 2010; Cram, 2009; Liamputtong, 2010; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Smith, 1999, 2008; Swadener & Mutua 2008; Wilson, 2008) articulate resistance to Euro-Western research methodologies by discussing a process called decolonization and strategies for decolonization. Decolonization is a process of centering the concerns and worldviews of the colonized Other so that they understand themselves through their own assumptions and perspectives. It is an event and a process that involves the following:

1. Creating and consciously using various strategies to liberate the "captive mind" from oppressive conditions that continue to silence and marginalize the voices of subordinated, colonized, non-Western societies that encountered European colonization

2. The restoration and development of cultural practices, thinking patterns, beliefs, and values that were suppressed but are still relevant and necessary to the survival and birth of new ideas, thinking, techniques, and lifestyles that contribute to the advancement and empowerment of the historically oppressed and former colonized non-Western societies (Smith, 1999, 2008)

Decolonization is thus a process of conducting research in such a way that the worldviews of those who have suffered a long history of oppression and marginalization are given space to communicate from their frames of reference. It is a process that involves "researching back" to question how the disciplines—psychology, education, history,

anthropology, sociology, or science—through an ideology of Othering have described and theorized about the colonized Other and refused to let the colonized Other name and know from their frame of reference. It includes a critical analysis of dominant literatures written by historians, psychologists, anthropologists, and social science researchers in general, aimed at exposing the problematic influence of the Western eyes (Mohanty, 1991) and how they legitimize "the positional superiority of Western knowledge" (Said, 1993). Vine Deloria (1988), reflecting on the role of anthropologist researchers, notes,

> An anthropologist comes out to the Indian reservation to make OBSERVA-TIONS. During the winter period, these observations will become books by which future anthropologists will be trained, so that they can come out to reservations years from now and verify the observations they have studied. (cited in Louis, 2007, p. 132)

This quotation is important in showing how knowledge about the formerly colonized and historically oppressed communities is constructed and how this knowledge accumulates into a body of literature that informs future research activities. There is also the disturbing role of theory in framing research objectives and research questions. David W. Gegeo and Karen A. Watson-Gegeo (2001) note,

> Anthropologists' accounts of other people's cultures are not indigenous accounts of those cultures, even though they may be based on interviews with and observations of indigenous community's individuals and societies. All of the foregoing activities, while they draw on indigenous cultural knowledge, are imagined, conceptualized, and carried out within the theoretical and methodological frameworks of Anglo-European forms of research, reasoning and interpreting. (p. 58)

In Aoteroa/New Zealand, Russell Bishop (2008b) notes how the colonizers, using colonial paradigms, have developed a social pathology approach that dominates research on Maori. These observations about the role of literature and theory in the design of research studies remind us that we have to be critical readers of the research studies from which we draw and design future studies.

The Decolonization Process

Poka Laenui (2000) suggests five phases in the process of decolonization: (1) rediscovery and recovery, (2) mourning, (3) dreaming, (4) commitment, and (5) action.

Rediscovery and Recovery. This refers to the process where the colonized Other rediscover and recover their own history, culture, language, and identity. It involves a process of interrogating the captive mind so that the colonized Other and the historically oppressed—for instance, women, the deaf, the disabled, children, and the elderly—can come to define in their own terms what is real to them. They can also define their own rules on what can be known and what can be spoken, written about, how, when, and where.

Mourning. This refers to the process of lamenting the continued assault on the historically oppressed and former colonized Other's identities and social realities. Mourning forms an important part of healing and moving to dreaming. As a researcher educated in the United States, my initial research uncritically used the dominant research methodologies. With time, I began to ask myself why the research was not making a difference in the lives of the people. I started asking myself if I could recognize myself in the people and communities described in the studies I and other scholars conducted. Imagine reading some of the research that distorts the life experiences of the peoples and communities you know. The first reaction to reading such texts would most likely be frustration and mourning. In Chapter 3, I relate my journey to the United States and back to conduct research in my country, Botswana. Decolonization requires going further than mourning to dreaming.

Dreaming. During this phase, the colonized Other explore their cultures and invoke their histories, worldviews, and indigenous knowledge systems to theorize and imagine other possibilities. My journey to learn methodologies indigenous to the Western culture and going back to my country, a former British colony experiencing a plethora of research-driven interventions to address social problems such as poverty and HIV/AIDS infections, took me to a phase beyond frustration and mourning to that of dreaming and imagining other ways of doing research. You are invited throughout this book to dream and imagine other ways of conducting research, employing methodologies that are indigenous to the communities you study. Imagine, for example, that there are other literatures indigenous to the communities you study that have not found their way into the global communities of knowledge and practice. Imagine that in the lived experiences, oral traditions, language, metaphorical sayings, and proverbs of the communities that you research are concepts and theoretical frameworks that can inform the research process. Imagine that in the communities where you conduct research there are researchers and that they, too, can theorize and conduct research and that they, too, have the right to ownership of the knowledge they produce. Imagine the research questions, methods, literature reviewed, ways of disseminating data, and the language used if research was by the formerly colonized and historically silenced. To dream is to invoke indigenous knowledge systems, literatures, languages, worldviews, and collective experiences of the colonized Other to theorize and facilitate a research process that gives voice and is indigenous to the communities you research.

Commitment. Dreaming is followed by commitment where researchers, for example, define the role of research in community development and their roles and responsibilities to the communities and scholarship of research. Researchers become political activists demonstrating commitment to addressing the challenge of including the voices of the colonized Other in all the stages of the research process and conducting research that translates into changes in the material conditions of the local peoples as well as their control over produced knowledge. There is a growing concern, for instance, that researchers feel compelled for career reasons to conduct research that they are ill equipped to carry out and that their passive dissemination of research findings through professional journals hardly results in meaningful changes in the lives of the researched. The third world mourns, for example, that the "massive landing of experts, each in charge of

investigating, measuring, and theorizing about this or that little aspect of Third World Societies" (Escobar, 1995, p. 45) has resulted in a situation where "our own history, culture and practices, good or bad, are rediscovered and translated into the journals of the North and come back to us re-conceptualized, couched in languages and paradigms which make it all sound new and novel" (Namuddu, 1989, p. 28).

Action.   The last phase is action, when dreams and commitment translate into strategies for social transformation. Researchers at this phase embrace participatory research methods that give voice to the colonized Other and promote empowerment, inclusivity, and respect for all involved in the research process. The key aspect of participatory research is that the researched are actively involved in analyzing their situations, finding solutions, and taking action to address their concerns and to work for the betterment of their communities. The researcher has a moral responsibility to support the colonized Other in their belief that their collective experiences, indigenous knowledge, and history are valuable. The moral stance of the researcher as an activist committed to social transformation, indigenizing mainstream research methodologies to include other knowledge systems, is necessary to address concerns about the captive mind and the undervaluing, belittling, and marginalization of the practices, values, and worldviews of the colonized Other.

Strategies for Decolonization

Linda Smith (1999) has identified strategies for decolonization as follows:

Deconstruction and Reconstruction. This refers to destroying what has wrongly been written—for instance, interrogating distortions of people's life experiences, negative labeling, deficit theorizing, genetically deficient or culturally deficient models that pathologized the colonized Other—and retelling the stories of the past and envisioning the future. These strategies facilitate the process of recovery and discovery.

Self-Determination and Social Justice. For scholars, academics, and the overresearched former colonized and historically oppressed peoples disempowered by Western research hegemony, issues in research should be addressed within the wider framework of self-determination and social justice. Self-determination in research refers to the struggle by those marginalized by Western research hegemony to seek legitimacy for methodologies embedded in the histories, experiences, ways of perceiving realities, and value systems. Social justice in research is achieved when research gives voice to the researched and moves from a deficit-based orientation, where research was based on perceived deficits in the researched, to reinforcing practices that have sustained the lives of the researched. Social justice is addressed by ensuring that those historically oppressed groups; marginalized and labeled; former colonies; descendants of slaves; indigenous peoples; those people in the third world, fourth world and developing countries; or those pushed to the margins on the basis of their gender, race/ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, age, religion, or sexual orientation; and immigrants and refugees are given space to decenter dominant Western research paradigms and

to place at the center of analysis the realities, knowledges, values, and methodologies that give meaning to their life experiences. Chapter 8 discusses research strategies that counter deficit-based research and reveal the researcher's positive aspects, resilience, and acts of resistance to Western research hegemony, which is needed for social change.

Ethics. There is a need to recognize—and where none exists, formulate, legislate, disseminate, and make known and understood internationally—ethical issues and legislation that protect indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing of the colonized Other. The international community of researchers is increasingly aware of the researcher's responsibility. The American Psychological Association (2002) describes the researcher's ethical responsibilities working with Asian American/Pacific Islander populations, people of African descent, Hispanics, and American Indians:

> As an agent of prosocial change, the culturally competent psychologist carries the responsibility of combating the damaging effects of racism, prejudice, bias and oppression in all their forms, including all of the methods we use to understand the population we serve. . . . A consistent theme . . . relates to the interpretation and dissemination of research findings that are meaningful and relevant to each of the four populations. (p. 1)

Developing countries and indigenous communities have come up with their own ethics review boards and ethical guidelines. The Maori of New Zealand, for instance, have Guidelines for Research and Evaluation with Maori (Ministry of Social Development, 2004); in Australia, the Aborigines have the Mi'kinaw Research Principles and Protocols (Aboriginal Research Centre, 2005). Elsewhere, Chilisa (2009) notes how the plethora of ethics review boards, each operating with its own ethics guidelines, has given rise to conflict over which ethics guidelines should be used, especially where there is partnership or collaborative research between researchers from developed countries and those from former colonized societies. Some researchers from developed countries, still operating with colonial tools of manipulation and power to access, control, and own all types of data from the former colonies, invoke contract agreements to rewrite, write over, erase, and relegate to marginal and irrelevant the ethical guidelines from former colonized societies. Still others are compelled by research funding agencies, many of them international corporations based in developed countries, to enter into contract agreements that privilege Euro-Western ethical frameworks. (See Chapter 3 for these malpractices.) Committed researchers define their responsibilities and are consistently engaged in self-reflection and self-questioning that promotes and privileges the right of the disempowered to be heard.

Language. Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986a, 1986b, 1993) and Ali Mazrui (1990) advocate for writing in indigenous languages as part and parcel of the anti-imperialist struggle. Chapter 3 discusses how language mediates the research process, recovering and revitalizing, validating indigenous knowledge and cultures of the historically marginalized, and thus creating space to decenter hegemonic Western research paradigms.

Internationalization of Indigenous Experiences. Indigenous scholars internationalize the experiences, issues, and struggles of the colonized people by coming together in global and local spaces to plan, organize, and struggle collectively for self-determination.

History. People must study the past to recover their history, culture, and language to enable a reconstruction of what was lost that is useful to inform the present.

Critique. There is a need to critique the imperial model of research, which continues to deny the colonized and historically marginalized Others space to communicate from their own frames of reference.

SUMMARY

The chapter presents an argument for the need to interrogate Euro-Western research paradigms, decolonize the mind, and problematize research and conducting research as a power struggle between the interest and ways of knowing of the West and that of the "Other." Key terminologies, concepts, and principles that set apart indigenous research as an emerging distinct methodology are presented. The claim is made that relationships, connectedness, and spirituality are common features among indigenous people. Five phases in the decolonization process and strategies for decolonization are discussed.

ACTIVITY 1.1

1. Search the database for this article: Held, M. B. E. (2019). Decolonizing research paradigms in the context of settler colonialism: An unsettling, mutual and collaborative effort. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 1–16.

2. Discuss Held's view on how decolonization should proceed.

Key Points

- Euro-Western paradigms should interrogate the role of imperialism, colonization, and globalization in the construction of knowledge.

- Relationality, the multiple connections that indigenous peoples have with those around them and with the living and the nonliving, should form part of their social history and how indigenous research is conducted.

- Indigenous research has a decolonization intent.

Suggested Readings

Alatas, S. H. (2004). The captive mind and creative development. In P. N. Mukheriji & C. Sengupta (Eds.), *Indigeneity and universality in social science: A South African response.* New Delhi, India: Sage.

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Deloria, V. (1969). *Custer died for your sins: An Indian manifesto.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Fixico, D. L. (Ed.). (2003). *The American Indian mind in a linear world: American Indian studies and traditional knowledge*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Levac, L., McMurtry, L., Stienstra, D., Baikie, G., Hanson, C., & Mucina, D. (2018). *Learning across indigenous and Western knowledge systems and intersectionality: Reconciling social research approaches*. [Technical Report.] Guelph, Canada: University of Guelph, Social and Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada.